



DREWRY'S BLUFF IN 1862

Mr. E. B. Howle Gives His Recollections of the Day.

WHO WAS IN COMMAND?

He Says that a Naval Officer, Not Maj. Drewry, Was—Details of the Fight With the Federal Ironclads.

Incidents and Personalities, Etc.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Owing to the great "Pawnee scare" in 1861, it became very plain to the authorities at Richmond that there would have to be some sort of defensive works placed on the shores of the James River below the city to prevent the vessels of the Federal navy from coming up the river and menacing the State and Confederate States capital, which were then wholly at the mercy of any armed vessel that might be sent against it.

After careful consideration the bluff on the river at Drewry's farm was selected as the most suitable place. Just here there is a bend in the river, which is very narrow at that point, and the bluff on the south side rises almost perpendicularly about seventy-five feet high, making it very much like Gibraltar, in Spain, or Quebec, in Canada, save that in an effort to pass, ships would be compelled to come within about one hundred and fifty yards of the shore and nearly under the guns of the fort.

In a short time preparations were made and land batteries were commenced here. However, guns were scarce, most of them being in instant demand for coast defense, and it was some time before two thirty-two pound smooth-bore guns were installed and Captain Drewry and his company (mostly from Chesterfield county) were placed in charge.

WHO LAID OUT THE WORKS.
What engineer, if any, laid out the works, or if the works "just grew up," it is hard to say, but one improvement after another was made until, in 1864, the place was deemed impregnable by land or water. The fact remains that in 1864, Butler landed his army, drove strong, and the Confederates marched inland to within a mile or two of the place, he never made an assault upon it or even a demonstration in force against it.

Little was done within the first year beside mounting the two thirty-two pound guns and making preparations for three or four more. So great was the security felt in the ability of the fortification, that it was held by the Confederates until the fall of 1864, when it was deemed necessary and prudent to draw in the Confederate lines, which compelled the evacuation of Norfolk and the navy yard and the subsequent destruction of the great defender, the Virginia.

Immediate steps were then taken to obstruct the river at Drewry's Bluff. The Curtis Peck, Northampton and several other vessels were sunk in the river at the Bluff, under the direction of the navy. My ship, the Jamestown, was sunk near the channel in the afternoon of May 12th at about 6 o'clock.

Acting under orders of the assistant surgeon, I removed all the men from the ship and carried them to the shore, where they were taken to the third cove to the Patrick Henry, then lying near the mouth of Pulling Creek, and turned them over to the surgeon of the latter ship. I received two pistols from Captain Tucker, the Patrick Henry to be delivered to Capt. Barney, who was with his men on Drewry's Bluff. It was dark and raining as we pushed off from the shore, and we were coming up the river with two vessels in tow, designed for sinking in the river, as additional obstructions, was the William Allison.

NAVAL OFFICERS.
I found we were about to run into one of the schooners when I called out to Tom Hollywood (the boatsman) to send off with the boat hook. Tom placed the end of the boat hook against the bottom of the boat and when the boat went up through the bottom, the boat hook went through the bottom of the cutter and she sank at once.

Overboard I went and felt for the bottom with my feet and found the water was over my head. I then swam as fast as I could, until I reached the shore, where I was taken ashore still holding the pistols, which I delivered to Captain Barney, who was found by me hunched around a fire a few paces from the shore.

The Virginia's men came on the 13th or 14th and the whole made a strong force for so small a fort.

There were in the fort at the time two smooth-bore 32-pound guns, sent from Richmond; one 11-inch Columbiad gun, taken from the steamer Patrick Henry and two 22-pound rifle guns taken from the ship Jamestown. These latter were "swivel" guns that could be raised, lowered and turned at will. The breech of these two swivel guns (they were cast iron) had been turned off and afterwards strengthened with thick bands of iron wire. The guns were shrouded and from this plan of the Confederates came the present idea of the "built up guns" of our United States navy and coast defense.

Captain E. Farrand, as ranking officer, took command, and soon had everything

would be the proper thing now. Built more raised a monument to perpetuate the memories of Wells and McComas—the heroes of North Point. With Richmond as the place who died for her on both sides of her border? The hero of the Yellow Tavern and the "Henry of the Bluff."

I've often thought that it would be well to form a society of the "faithful few" of the battles of Hampton Roads and Drewry's Bluff and I ask some of the participants to make a move in that direction.

E. B. HOWLE.
Surgeon's steward, C. S. Jamestown.
Manchester, Va.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Sir—Will you kindly inquire of the "vets" through your Confederate column if any of them ever saw in use in the Confederate Army during the war a small, circular, leaden bullet, bearing a lion's head embossed on the front. I have a plate of this description, and I am told that it was made in England for the British Army, and that large quantities of them were shipped through the blockade to the South.

I also have a revolver, of the heavy Colt's cavalry pattern, with "Leach (or Lerch) & Rice, C. S. A." stamped on the barrel and a small, circular, leaden bullet, bearing a lion's head embossed on the front. I have a plate of this description, and I am told that it was made in England for the British Army, and that large quantities of them were shipped through the blockade to the South.

"ANTIQUARIAN."

SAILOR'S CREEK

An Account of the Battle Fought on the Retreat.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Will you please give us an account in the Confederate columns of the battle of Sallors' Creek. I am a veteran and have never seen an account. I belonged to Company B, First Virginia Artillery, from James City county, Major Robert Stiles commanding. First Lieutenant Savage Blanton acting captain. I was wounded and carried to Point Lookout. Any account given of the battle will be greatly appreciated by

GEORGE W. GEDDY.

The engagement at Sallors' Creek was a part of the Appomattox campaign. It was fought on the 2nd of April, 1865, and was one of the last battles of the war. The Confederate army, commanded by General Robert E. Lee, was defeated by the Union army, commanded by General Ulysses S. Grant. The battle was fought on a narrow strip of land between the James River and the Appomattox River. The Confederate army was forced to retreat across the Appomattox River and into the Pamunkey River.

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QUERIES & ANSWERS

Colored Democrats.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Does a colored man, if known to be a Democrat, have a voice or vote in a Democratic primary election?

Crab Neck, Va.
No; that is not the custom here.

Dress of Professional Nurse.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Please publish in your paper what is the proper dress for a graduated professional nurse and oblige.

C. M. G.

The dress is all white—white dress and white cap.

Legislative Committees.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Will you please give the standing committee of the different departments of the present General Assembly and oblige.

A READER.

Send to your member of the Legislature and get a copy of the Manual. You will find what you want in it.

Diamond or Ruby?

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
To settle a dispute, will you please state which is more valuable, a diamond or a genuine ruby?

"G."

Albemarle county, Va.

The finest grade of ruby, known as the pigeon-blood, is the most valuable of all the precious stones.

Richmond Hills.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Will you please publish the poem "Richmond Hills," commencing: "An ancient home thrived on her seven hills?"

Staunton, Va.

All right; let some one send us a copy.

Patrick Henry.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Will you kindly inform me when the death and burial of Patrick Henry took place?

J. T. G.

Patrick Henry died June 6, 1799, at "Red Hill," Charlotte county, Va., and was buried there. It is now the home of his great-grandson, Mr. William Wirt Henry, Jr.

Spotswood's Shoe Buckle.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Sir—May I ask through the "Query Column" who now has in possession the silver shoe-buckle lost by Alexander Spotswood in Switz. Returning General's of the Golden Horse-Shoe first beheld the valley of Virginia from the Blue Ridge? I understand that it was found some years ago; or is this story of its recovery unfounded? Who can tell?

Broadway, Va.
We are unable to answer.

Dr. Brown and Family.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Sir—I hope that through you I may hear something from a Dr. Brown and his family, who lived near Reed Church, eight miles above Richmond. I was wounded during the Seven-days' fighting in '62 and was carried to Richmond and from there to Reed Church, and was waited on by this doctor's daughter—the best little woman I ever met. I was a mere boy—only 18—when there. If you can learn anything of her whereabouts, I would be so glad, for I don't want to cross over the river without knowing where she is if alive. So, hoping to hear in the near future,

I remain your obedient servant,
JOHN B. STEPHEN.

Clemson College, S. C.

Locomotive Building.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Will you please state the present yearly capacity of the Richmond Locomotive Works? I.e., How many locomotives can they build in twelve months?

200.

If the time of all employed in building a single locomotive were added together it would be equal to one man working how long?

LOCOMOTIVE

The Richmond Locomotive Works expect to turn out 200 locomotives this year.

Upon an average basis it would take one man to build, complete, the heaviest type of locomotive 19,520 hours, an average size locomotive 14,285 hours, and a smaller size still 12,280 hours.

Burned Farm Building.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
If a portion of a farm containing the building is sold and surveyed off, and the contract signed to give possession at a certain time, and a new building is in process of erection on the unsold portion of the farm, and before the deed is made the dwelling is burned from an unknown cause, whose loss is it? Is the purchaser legally free to not take the property?

Gordonsville, Va.

Blood Warts.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Sir—I have a four-year-old mule colt that has a large wart on one of his hind legs, but he is not able to walk on it. I have tried several remedies, but all fail to cure. I should like to know if there are others that might prove effective.

X. Y.

Care, Va.

In cases where the warts have a broad base, excision may be effected, but such warts have a tendency to grow again, hence it is a good plan to use a caustic.

The following may be of service:

Take Arsenic Acid, ten grains; Corrosive Sublimates, ten grains; Yaseline, 1-2 ounces.

Mix and apply once a day, and to be used very carefully. Give the mule a run at grass, which will often effect a cure, when everything else fails.

Two Law Questions.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
I took possession of one foot of ground belonging to B without B's knowledge and consent, and on which he built a creek wall. To whom does the wall belong?

A SUBSCRIBER.

The best advice we can give our friend is to consult a lawyer. And he will be compelled to learn the history of the

whole transaction before he can give competent advice.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Has the city the right to take land that has been kept fenced for years to widen a pavement that is already wide enough, without paying the owner for the land taken?

TAX-PAYER.

Is it for the city, not for you, to decide whether a street is wide enough or not. However, it cannot take any person's property for this purpose without due process of law and payment of damages.

A Dog's Distemper.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
I have a shepherd dog that has had the distemper about seven weeks. It will except that it jerks one hind leg all the time, and has spells sometimes which jerk him all over; eats heartily all the time. What can be done for him?

AN OLD READER.

Stomachic, Va.

This trouble (chorea) is most frequent as a sequel of distemper. Apart from attention to the general health of the animal only a few drugs seem to have any influence whatever. The following may be tried. Take

Strychnine of Sulphate 1 grain
Powder of Sulphate 1 dram
Mist. Turp. of Iron 7 drams

Mix; give according to size of dog, 5 to 10 drops in capsules, three times a day and gradually increase the dose until 10 to 15 drops are reached, and give the 10 to 15 drops for say, two weeks, then decrease until the 5 drops are given; then stop and report results.

What is the Office of Publication?

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Please tell me, if the publisher of a paper does business within a few hundred yards of county line and the post-office is across the line, which county would the paper belong in.

READER.

It is assumed that this inquiry is in relation to the free county circulation of publications admitted to the second-class of mail matter.

Under the law a publisher of such a publication may mail free of postage one copy to each actual subscriber residing in the county where the publication is printed, in whole or in part, and published, but the same may not be delivered at a free delivery office or distributed by carriers, unless postage is paid thereon.

Where a publication is admitted to the second-class of mail matter and mailed at the nearest post-office to the "known office of publication" but in an adjoining county, no copies addressed to subscribers residing in the county in which said postoffice is located may be mailed free of postage.

Land Purchase Problem.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—
Two men purchased 100 acres of land for \$500. Each man pays \$250. One pays 75 cents more per acre than the other. How much land does each man get and at what price per acre?

Please solve the above problem through the Query Column of your most valuable paper and oblige.

Yours truly,
L. T. W.

$x + y = 100$

$250 = x$

$250 = x + 75 - y$

$250 = 250 + 100$

$1 = 1$

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